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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum

Bangkok, 3–5 April 2018
Items 2 and 7 of the provisional agenda*

Review of the draft ministerial declaration on regional cooperation for energy transition towards sustainable and resilient societies in Asia and the Pacific

Adoption of the ministerial declaration on regional cooperation for energy transition towards sustainable and resilient societies in Asia and the Pacific and the report of the Forum

Draft ministerial declaration on regional cooperation for energy transition towards sustainable and resilient societies in Asia and the Pacific**

1. We, the Ministers of energy and high representatives, having met at the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and held in Bangkok from 3 to 5 April 2018,

2. Commit to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[1] in Asia and the Pacific, recognize that energy is a prerequisite to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda and acknowledge that while the Asia-Pacific region has made steady progress in attaining Goal 7 it is still far from achieving the vision of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, keeping in mind the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.[2] We recall the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific, adopted by the First Asia and Pacific Energy Forum,[3] as well as the Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014–2018.[3] We seek to further accelerate the pace of energy

* ESCAP/APEF/2018/L.1.

** The final negotiated text will appear in the draft report and will be adopted under agenda item 7.

1 General Assembly resolution 70/1.

2 General Assembly resolution 69/313.

3 See E/ESCAP/APEF/3.

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transitions and further encourage the progress towards achieving Goal 7 – with targets on access, efficiency, renewables and means of implementation – taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development, and respecting national policies and priorities. Energy transitions should rely on all energy sources and technologies, as appropriate, implemented in a sustainable manner and in accordance with national circumstances to advance towards an energy sector that is clean, low emission, safe and efficient.

3. Concerned that more than 420 million people remain without access to electricity and 2.1 billion people continue to rely on traditional cooking fuels and technologies which have harmful health and environmental effects, we commit to strengthening regional cooperation, including by working together with public-private partnerships making use of existing and new international platforms,[4] to support national efforts to achieve universal access to electricity by 2030 and to scale up access to clean cooking facilities, including the safe disposal of waste emanating from renewable energy infrastructure.

3 bis. Noting that renewable energy is an important pathway to a less carbon intensive, more efficient and more sustainable energy system, and recognizing that hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal, biofuels, ocean waves and other renewables offer clean, climate-friendly and inexhaustible energy resources with an unprecedented opportunity to bring affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy to people and improve their lives.

4. We welcome the accession of the Asia-Pacific region to the global partnership, critical to promoting renewable energy uptake with increased investment, installed capacity, and consumption. We recognize that grid system capacity and readiness for variable renewable energy integration, as well as the lack of technologies capable of storing electricity, remain key limiting factors. We seek to further develop public and private financial and insurance mechanisms and a favourable policy environment for advanced energy technologies in the energy mix, including using technologies to reduce total emissions from the consumption of fossil fuels. We encourage the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, to scale up renewable energy within the energy mix.

5. We recognize that in spite of the progress that countries in the Asia-Pacific region have made on energy efficiency, the region continues to rank highest in the world in terms of energy intensity. We encourage the regional approaches and efforts by member countries to increase efficiency of the overall energy supply chain, from extraction, conversion, delivery to end use, through their national strategies and energy development plans. We recognize the important role that the private sector has to play in this area and seek to make suitable provisions to facilitate its participation. We commit to undertake further measures and actions on energy efficiency, such as targeted action plans, standards for appliances, lighting and mechanical systems, labelling, support for energy service companies and energy efficiency promotion campaigns, with due consideration for national circumstances and priorities, including ways to combat wasteful consumption of energy.

6. We acknowledge that the Asia-Pacific region is projected to account for two thirds of global energy growth between now and 2040 and recognize that in meeting this demand, countries can further diversify their energy mix. New opportunities for energy diversification are arising from emerging trends

[4] International Renewable Energy Agency, International Solar Alliance, International Energy Agency, International Energy Forum, International Atomic Energy Agency, among others.

such as rapid deployment and falling costs of clean energy technologies, growing electrification and the shift to a more services-oriented economy in the region, as well as the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We call for further effective measures and actions towards rationalizing the share of fossil fuels in the energy mix, such as natural gas, which, as a flexible, relatively clean and reliable energy source, can play an essential role in the energy transition and in building low-carbon economics, with due consideration for national circumstances and priorities. We encourage regional and international cooperation on efficient use of energy, including natural gas and oil, that will seek to create a synergetic effect in the region, in order to strive for access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

7. We recognize the importance of energy connectivity and the potential contribution of cross-border energy trade in Asia and the Pacific in attaining Sustainable Development Goal 7. We stress the necessity of common efforts to facilitate the development and implementation of regional energy connectivity and energy trade in Asia and the Pacific. **Efficient, reliable and resilient electricity infrastructure plays an important role in stimulating regional economic growth and development. [USA]** We task the Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity to work further on the regional road map on cross-border electricity, based on experiences and best practices, with a view to promoting policy coherence and efficient institutional mechanisms and seek further regional cooperation to improve energy connectivity, including electricity and oil and gas pipelines. **[US reserves on this paragraph]**

Alt 7. Efficient, reliable and resilient electricity infrastructure plays an important role in stimulating regional economic growth and development. We recognize the potential advantages to be gained from the establishment of voluntary, integrated cross-border systems based on internationally accepted standards and market-based approaches that further individual nations' energy security. [USA; Pakistan, Mongolia]

8. We recognize the role of national Governments in creating their respective energy policies that support energy transitions and the achievement of national sustainable development objectives. We acknowledge that well-designed national policies, including more integrated and long-term energy planning and better market design for energy sector transformation, are critical in achieving sustainable energy for all. Mainstream, as appropriate, Sustainable Development Goal 7 into national development and energy policies, plans and strategies and encourage communication and sharing of best practices and coordinate on our energy development policy and planning, including renewable energy policies.

9. We will encourage policy frameworks designed to phase out and rationalize inefficient fossil fuel subsidies to discourage wasteful consumption, while taking into account domestic conditions and priorities.

9 bis. We acknowledge the efforts of developing countries to implement Sustainable Development Goal 7, while encouraging the international community to support, with mutual agreement, and strive to implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

10. We acknowledge that the 2030 Agenda contains a call for a robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated follow-up and review framework to be implemented at the global, regional and national levels, and recognize that accessible, timely, reliable and high-quality disaggregated data contribute to our efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7 and

other goals related to energy. We note that energy data quality and availability have been uneven across our countries. We acknowledge the efforts made by the secretariat to develop the Asia Pacific Energy Portal which accommodates data indicators, policy information and infrastructure mapping for all countries in the region. We urge international organizations, including the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and other relevant stakeholders, to assist developing countries in building capacity for producing, analysing and using various forms of data, both quantitative and qualitative, to effectively implement, follow up and review Goal 7.

11. We recognize that while strong political commitment at the national level is a prerequisite, enhanced regional cooperation can build and strengthen capacities, knowledge-sharing, technology innovation and technology transfer based on mutually agreed terms, provided that the intellectual property associated with these efforts is fully protected and does not negatively affect economic interests. Regional cooperation can also mobilize investment, support establishing regional energy markets and improve trade levels. To this end, we reiterate the importance of North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation through various existing and new international platforms.[4] We recognize the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, including its Committee on Energy, as an important intergovernmental platform to facilitate regional energy cooperation. We also recognize the important role of the Commission in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including its Goal 7, and its follow-up and review process, by, inter alia, promoting policy dialogue and knowledge-sharing and helping to link the national and global levels of implementation.

11 bis. We acknowledge and continue to encourage and promote women's full, equal and effective participation and leadership in the design and implementation of energy policies and to mainstream a gender perspective into such policies.

12. We decide:

(a) To further promote cooperation among countries in the region towards effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 and other goals related to energy, including through subregional and regional energy cooperation, in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;[5]

(b) To task the Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity to work further on the regional road map on cross-border electricity connectivity with a view to presenting it to the Committee on Energy at its second session, based on experience and best practices, taking into account ongoing regional and subregional dialogues;

Alt b. To broaden the discussion on regional energy connectivity based on experience and best practices, including the ongoing discussion on this topic within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; [USA]

(c) To convene the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in 2023, to review the progress of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 in the Asia-Pacific region, including the progress on the present Declaration.

[5] E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II.

13. We request the Executive Secretary to support members and associate members in the implementation of the present Declaration by:

(a) Promoting regional and subregional cooperation through existing and new international platforms[4] and fostering the sharing of best practices and experiences to assist countries in their efforts to undertake the actions and commitments highlighted in the present Declaration;

(b) Assisting countries, upon request, in developing national road maps for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 and in mainstreaming the global targets related to energy into national policies, plans and strategies;

(c) Following up on and reviewing progress towards Goal 7 targets at the regional level in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(d) Continuing to support the work of the Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels;

(e) Conducting analytical studies on key energy trends and emerging issues in the Asia and Pacific region and compiling and disseminating relevant energy information and data, including through the Asia Pacific Energy Portal, to ensure informed intergovernmental deliberations, including at the sessions of the Commission and the Committee of Energy;

(f) Initiating necessary preparatory work for the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in a timely manner.